Children’s Ministry
Parent Handbook

First United Methodist Church  Children’s Ministry
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Welcome to the First United Methodist Children’s Ministry! We hope you find your experience here to be both inviting and meaningful. Our children’s ministry team at FUMC is committed to partnering with families to establish and nurture young disciples so that their knowledge and love of Christ grows into a mature faith. We try through our creative curriculum to emphasize relationships and through opportunities for children to reach out within their church, community and world to serve others. We hope through these efforts we can grow young disciples.

This handbook was designed to assist you in finding answers to the most commonly asked questions about our children’s programs. We hope you will find it to be beneficial. It contains information about our programs, policies, contacts, and volunteer opportunities. Our desire for this handbook is that it would serve as a valuable resource to you as you navigate your way through children’s ministry area. Our ministry seeks to partner with you in teaching your children the truths from God’s Word and training them to set their hope in Christ alone so that they might walk in His ways.

We desire for your child to have a great experience at church. The Bible tells us in Psalm 127:3 that children are a gift from the Lord. Both parent’s and volunteers play an essential and influential role in making God’s love real.

Once again, welcome to our church and to our ministries for children. We look forward to a wonderful year of watching our youngest ones grow in faith, hope and love. Together we can be the difference in building God’s Kingdom.
“The Path”

Connecting Kids to Christ

Your child’s spiritual formation is very important to us, so we have created “The Path…to Connect Kids to Christ.”

It is a map of your journey together as a family, where each step has an intentional purpose to Connect your Child to Christ and grow to feel a part of our church. Providing your child a firm foundation at a young age will help them to make the right decisions when they reach Middle School; once you have given them their wings to act from their own faith.

Our Sunday mornings we use the “Think Orange Curriculum” that includes large group and small group time. The large group is high energy with the purpose of engaging children to learn about Jesus Christ. The small group is led by a committed small group leader who builds a relationship with the children through games, prayer and conversation. We also offer musicals, bell choir and family events.

It’s the framework for all we will do because it’s our goal to “Connect your Child to Christ.”
Sunday School Programs

The Nursery~Planting the Seeds~Infant - 2years

Is a safe and loving environment where God’s Word is planted in every child’s heart. This stage is dedicated to providing a safe sanctuary and the very best of care in a safe, secure and loving environment.

The Garden~Where the Roots are Formed~Pre-K

The Garden uses several key strategies to encourage children to talk to God any time and any place and also provides parents the tools to connect with their child at home. This stage is where a child begins to form their spiritual roots and experience worship for the first time. By the time a child is age five, they will believe: 1) God made me 2) God loves me and 3) Jesus wants to be my forever friend.

Twinklers~Building the Foundation for Glowing Future~K-1st Grade

Twinklers is built around three basic truths every child should embrace according to what Jesus modeled in Luke 2:52. They will grow up with wisdom to make wise choices, faith to trust in God no matter what, and the value of friendship to treat others the way he/she wants to be treated.

Shooting Stars~Ready to Enter Worship~2nd-4th Grade

Shooting Stars begins with a committed nine-month class called “Worship Readiness” which teaches children about United Methodist beliefs and sacraments. The children will be gradually be integrated into our church worship services, so by the time they reach Middle School, they are committed worshippers in our church body and disciples of Jesus. Also, they will emphasizes the Bible as the Word of God and children are taught how to use their bible as a daily tool.
Comets: the Journey Continues~5th Grade

Comets prepares a child to crossover to Middle School by focusing on intentional, small group discipleship that tackles their tough questions, captivates their attention, engages their participation, teaches them how to study God’s word, and encourages their faith practice.

Childcare for Parent’s attending classes

Tuesday Morning~9:15 a.m.-11:15 a.m.

We offer Tuesday morning childcare for children birth~Pre-K. The ministry provides needs of our children while their parents attend adult bible study class.

Wednesday Nights~6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

We offer a Wednesday night childcare for children birth~5th grade. The ministry provides needs of our children while their parents attend adult activities at church.

Thursday Nights~7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.(Celebrate Recovery Only)

We offer a Thursday night childcare for Celebrate Recovery children birth~5th grade. This ministry provides needs of the children while their parents attend Celebrate Recovery.

Programming for Parent’s attending classes

Christmas Musical~Pre-K 3-up

Our Kid’s Musical practice is offered Sunday Nights from 5 p.m.-6:30 p.m. during the months of September-December. It provides kids with a great opportunity to use their abilities in singing and acting for the glory of GOD.

Handbell Choir~Pre-K 3-up (Must be able to read colors or numbers)

The Handbell Choir practice is offered on Sunday Nights from 5 p.m.-6:30 p.m. during the months of January-March.
Guidelines and Procedures

Check in and Dismissal Policy

Sunday School, Programming or Childcare Check-in begins at the following times:

ALL PARENT’S MUST REMAIN ON CAMPUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service/Classes</th>
<th>Drop off</th>
<th>Pick up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>9:15 a.m.</td>
<td>10:40 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>12:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Night 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>4:45 p.m.</td>
<td>6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 9:15 a.m.</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>11:15 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday Night 6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>6:15 p.m.</td>
<td>7:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday Night(CR only)</td>
<td>6:45 p.m.</td>
<td>9:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Please be courteous of our volunteers time and pick your child up at close of service or class**

You must check-in your child in at one of the children’s ministry computers. There are designated computer check-in stations located at the front and back lobby in Education Building and one designated computer check-in station in the Hancock Building for Elementary. Please place pick up name badge on your child so it is visible for teachers to see child’s name.

Only parents or guardians who have the pick up name badge will be allowed to pick up a child from his/her class. Must be 18 years of age to pick up child and have matching name badge.
Safety Policy

First United Methodist Staff and volunteers who work with children or youth are required to have yearly training regarding our church’s Safe Sanctuary Policy. This policy is a set of guidelines that helps prevent the opportunity for the occurrence and/or the appearance of abuse of children, youth and helps protect workers from false accusations and/or suspicions.

- There is always at least two volunteers supervising children/youth regardless of children/youth in group. If traveling in vehicle or bus there must be two adults in vehicle.

- Children/youth should not be allowed to leave the designated area without permission and supervision. They must be picked up by parent or guardian that is 18 years or older.

- Children 5th grade and under are escorted to restroom by teacher or hall angel.

- Background checks are required for staff or volunteers who work with children or youth.

- The entire Safe Sanctuary policy is available on the church website (www.fumc-clermont.org)

Health Policy

If your child has a food allergy (please bring snack for Nursery-Pre-K), diabetes, asthma, or any other medical conditions which may affect your child’s participation, please use medical alert bands at information desk and notify teachers each week.

Young children are very susceptible to colds, flus and other diseases. We realize a child’s illness can be a difficult time for a parent, and that it is often frustrating to rearrange you schedules to provide care for a sick child at home.
We want to help eliminate these concerns as much as possible. This requires that our Sunday School classes and nursery has the healthiest environment possible. The best way to prevent illness is to prevent exposure. The purposes of this policy is to help our Sunday School teachers, nursery caregivers and parents work together to provide a healthy environment. If your child has been symptom-free for 24 hours they may return to our programs or childcare. Please do not bring your child if the child has:

- fever or had one in the last 24 hours
- persistent cough or congestion
- discharge from eyes
- Green or yellow runny nose
- symptoms of a possible communicable disease (including but not limited to reddened eyes, sore throat, headache, stomach ache, diarrhea, questionable rash, vomiting, etc.)
- If your child is being treated with antibiotics he or she should received treatment for at least 24 hours before coming to Sunday School Class or Nursery. Child should be diarrhea free. A probiotic will help with diarrhea when taking antibiotic.
Expectation of Children

Love the Lord your GOD with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is love your neighbor. Matthew 22:37-39

The 3 C’s for acceptable behavior are Courteous, Cooperative, Careful

Courteous

1 Peter 2:17 “Show proper respect to everyone.”

Listen to your leaders

Listen while others are sharing or asking questions

Keep your hands to yourself

Use kind words

Participate in discussions

Cooperative

John 15:12 “Love each other as I have loved you.”

Wear your name tags

Greet your friends with love as they arrive

Participate together in class through pray, presence, gifts and service

Include everyone
Careful

1 Corinthians 12:25 “We should have equal concern for each other.”

Let your parent’s check you in on computer

You don’t want to make your friends sick so stay home if you are sick

Take care of God’s house

Food and drinks may not be brought to programs with exception of medical or allergies

3 D’s for unacceptable behavior: Dangerous, Disrespectful, Disruptive

Consequences

• If child is not following these guidelines his/her leaders will give one reminder of the rules

• If misbehavior continues the leader will have a private conference with the child and parents will notified parent at pick up.

• If misbehavior still continues, the leader will contact the Pre-K or Elementary coordinator who will talk to the child and remove him/her from group.

• If a child is having trouble adjusting to the expectations of the class, parents will be asked to attend the program with their child for a minimum of two weeks to reinforce appropriate behavior.
Expectations of Parents

Every adult in our church is asked to support the church through their prayer, their presence, their gifts, and their services. When you enroll your child in Children’s Ministry Program, we depend on all parent’s to assist in some way.

Contact Beth Reed, Children’s Ministry Director, to discuss how you can be involved in touching the lives of God’s precious children. (childrensministry@fumc-clermont.org or (352) 394-2412.

Here are some opportunities:

**Elementary or Preschool Sunday School Teacher**

Lead children in activities, group discussion, follow lesson plan, attend large group lesson and do closing pray.

**Sunday School Helper**

Assist the Sunday School Teacher and interact with children during activities, group discussion, help keep children engaged while teacher leads discussions and activities.

**Checker (May attend service from approx 9:45 a.m.-10:30 a.m.)**

Stationed In Education Building and Hancock Building to help greet families and assist with computer check-in, direct families to appropriate classrooms, and check name badge (child to guardian) upon exit.

**Hall Angel**

Greet families and direct to appropriate classrooms, monitor halls throughout Sunday School, escort children from classroom to restrooms and back to classroom, lend parents and teachers a hand as needed.
Staff Contact Information

We hope that this handbook provides you with information that is helpful. If you have any questions or suggestions please feel free to contact the director or one of the children’s ministry staff.

**Director:** Beth Reed
(352)394-2412
childrensministry@fumc-clermont.org

**Elementary Coordinator:** Jennifer Mitchell
elementarycm@fumc-clermont.org

**Fusion Coordinator:** Janelle Reid
fusion@fumc-clermont.org

**Pre-K Coordinator:** Jamie Ruley
preschoolcm@fumc-clermont.org

**Childcare Coordinator and Safe Sanctuary Coordinator:**
Annamarie Schulz
nursery@fumc-clermont.org or safe@fumc-clermont.org

**Family Events:**
Jessica Calhoun
familyevents@fumc-clermont.org